

Unarmed Connecticut woman killed by police in Washington, DC: Collateral damage of the “war on terror”

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By this time, the American media has entirely lost interest in, or suppressed, the case of Miriam Carey, the dental hygienist from Stamford, Connecticut, who was executed by United States Capitol Police on October 3.

The federal police officers reportedly fired 17 bullets at Carey, an unarmed woman with a child in her car.

As far as the media and the political establishment are concerned, Carey’s killing was entirely legitimate. Posthumously, she has been smeared as psychotic and somehow representing a physical threat to the vast American state apparatus, bristling with weaponry.

In fact, Carey is collateral damage of the so-called “war on terror” and the atmosphere of paranoia and fear that has been deliberately manufactured by the government and law enforcement apparatus.

Why did Carey die? Allegedly, she struck a barrier near the White House, and subsequently slightly injured a Secret Service officer. Police then chased her vehicle to a traffic circle on Capitol Hill grounds. With guns drawn, Secret Service officers surrounded her car, “shouting orders.” Presumably fearing for her life, Carey drove off at high speed up Constitution Avenue. She was eventually forced off the road and shot to death by Capitol Police.

Court documents unsealed Tuesday reveal that police found no weapon or anything else of importance when they searched Carey’s car, including a lockbox. According to the Associated Press (AP), “A search warrant application shows police thought the lockbox might hold maps, drugs, documents pertaining to the White House, weapons and ammunition or ‘fruits of other crimes.’ But none of that was found inside the box, according to the search warrant results.”

Meanwhile in Stamford, according to the

Washington Post, “about 100 law enforcement personnel from the U.S. Secret Service, FBI, Connecticut State Police and Stamford police searched Carey’s apartment in the Woodside Green complex overnight Thursday...

“Under the assumption that something inside the apartment might pose a threat, police sent a robot through a window first and meticulously decontaminated people who went in and out of the unit... In the end, they found just a ‘typical’ first-floor two-bedroom apartment with ‘nothing out of the ordinary’...and allowed evacuated residents to return to their units.”

Carey’s family has publicly condemned the police action and intends to carry out its own investigation. On NBC’s *Today* show, in answer to a question about Carey’s high-speed flight in her car, her sister Valerie said, “What I do see is that perhaps maybe my sister was a little afraid being surrounded by officers with their guns drawn... My sister was fleeing. She was trying to figure out how to get out of there.”

The Carey family attorney, Eric Sanders, added, “She didn’t contribute anything [to the incident]... She had absolutely every right to be in the nation’s capital.”

Since 2001, as part of its justification for endless war abroad and the destruction of democratic rights at home, the American ruling elite has been obliged to try to keep the population in a state of constant terror. Public address systems repeatedly exhort airline passengers to report anything or anyone out of the ordinary.

New York City subway passengers are told “to be wary of suspicious behavior” and “take notice of people in bulky or inappropriate clothing.” The city’s

transit system's endlessly reiterated motto is "If you see something, say something."

The agencies and officers charged with "homeland security" are pumped up by this sort of propaganda, armed to the teeth and, as Carey's tragic fate demonstrated, frighteningly trigger-happy. Many of America's public places and Washington's in particular have been transformed into something ominous and threatening. The White House was once known as the "People's House." Approach it now and something horrible may well happen. It is clearly a free-fire zone, with cops empowered to shoot to kill.

At the same time, such incidents as the October 3 gunning down of Carey are seized upon to further intimidate the population, to inure it to "lock-down," martial law-type conditions.

Because a woman drove her car into a traffic barrier of some kind, "the House abruptly went into recess and lawmakers left the chamber floor... People standing outside the Supreme Court across the street from Congress were hurried into the court building by authorities... The White House was quickly locked down after the incident at Capitol Hill and the stretch of Pennsylvania Avenue in front of the compound was closed to pedestrians." (AP)

The *New York Times* reported further, "Capitol police could be seen with semi-automatic rifles drawn as they scrambled for position on the Capitol grounds. Several senators were outside the Capitol when they reported between four and six shots fired. Police in a high speed chase pulled over a black car in front of one of the Senate office buildings but witnesses said a man fled on foot with a gun visible. 'I heard a pop pop pop and we were told to get down,' said Senator Bob Casey, Democrat of Pennsylvania." Of course, the only ones doing any shooting were the police.

Moreover, within the general post-9/11 environment of panic and fear, Carey arrived in Washington at a particularly tense, malignant moment. The capital is beset by a bitter political crisis, which has ground the government and its operations to a halt.

Instinctively, there is a widespread popular sense that whatever the politicians are up to, something foul and reactionary is being planned behind the backs of the people. It is doubtful whether Congress and the White House have ever been held in greater contempt.

One can only guess at the disorientation that prevails

in America's ruling circles. These people know they are distrusted and widely despised. They have created enemies, almost willfully, in every quarter, home and abroad. Why shouldn't they "shout orders," stock up on firepower and in every episode always expect the worst?

The mentality of those in charge of the Capitol Police, the Secret Service and the other armed gangs who preside over the American capital reminds one of Macbeth's state of mind in his besieged, doomed castle in Dunsinane: "They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly, / But, bear-like, I must fight the course."



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